Recent accomplishments and activities in your state parks

Ancestral remains returned to Suguamish homeland

In late September 2007 State Parks staff and Commissioners joined about 100 participants at a ceremony dedicated to reburying 11 Suguamish ancestors near Old Man House, just south of the town of Suquamish.

The Burke Museum, in partnership with state parks, cared for the remains for several decades. In 2005, the tribe, museum and state parks began work to return remains to the tribe.

"It was an honor to be present at the reburial and to share in the ceremony," said Commissioner Joan Thomas of Seattle. Transfer of the Old Man House deed from State Parks to the Suquamish Tribe was memorable, but this event will be of utmost significance in my two terms as a Commissioner."

This was the first reburial of tribal ancestors coordinated by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission returned Old Man House State Park to the Suquamish Tribe in August of 2004.

Yakima Sportsman State Park will connect to trail

After nearly a year of public workshops, land-use planning recommendations



State Parks Commissioner Cecilia Vogt speaks to Yakima residents at a land-use planning session last

for Yakima area state parks went to the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission in August 2007. Discussions focused on visitor experience, natural and cultural resources and use of the park's buildings, fields and trails.

The interactive planning process rekindled a partnership between the Yakima Greenway Foundation and the Commission. The partners plan to work together to connect Yakima Sportsman State Park to the Yakima Greenway. This will create a six-mile loop trail in central Washington's largest city.

Volunteers help restore native vegetation at Bottle Beach

Nearly 40 volunteers replaced blackberry and Scotch broom with 3,000 native plants on Jan. 26 at Bottle Beach State Park on Grays Harbor, eight miles east of Westport. Twenty community members joined several other volunteer groups, including Grays Harbor Audubon,

Black Hills Audubon, Kinnickinnick Garden Club, Ocosta High School, Americorps, Grays Harbor Watershed and Pride Team Gravs Harbor. Work has continued during the past year to remove non-native, invasive plants.

The native plants will create a one and a half-acre buffer between the



Volunteers remove invasive plants and restore native vegetation at Bottle Beach State Park near Westport, in Grays Harbor.

future trail corridor and critical bird habitat areas in the upland areas. During a second restoration phase next fall, volunteers will focus on the park's wetland areas.

Bottle Beach State Park is in a shorebird area of international significance. The park consists of 75 acres, with 6,000 feet of ocean beach shoreline.

For more information contact Kelli Burke at (360) 956-4804.

Agency partners battle illegal dumping

State Parks is working with the Washington State Patrol and county sheriffs, along with the departments of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and Ecology to reduce litter and illegal dumping in state parks.

This spring the state patrol will conduct litter law emphasis patrols across the state.

Centennial 2013 Plan Recent Endorsements

• Melissa Armstrong • Rocky Armstrong • Brian Buntain • Wanda Cahill • Elois Dunst • Neil Estenson • Carol Hampton • Daniel Hampton • • Ivan Knigle • Michelle Land • Craig Larson • Sharon Larson • Barbara LaRue • Charlene Meins • Keelie Mohoney • Nykole Mitchell •

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CENTENNIAL 2013

- FIX WHAT WE HAVE EXPAND EXISTING PARKS AND TRAILS - BUILD NEW PARKS AND TRAILS

Annual birthday event at Washington's Capitol marks 95 years for State Parks



Legislators and staff, school students and tourists helped State Parks celebrate its 95th birthday on Feb. 28 and 29 in the Legislative

This year, 25 legislators agreed to spend a relaxing "Kodak" moment in a special, handmade rocker made by volunteers at Washington's newest state park at Cama Beach. The resulting photos will be assembled into a collage for Cama Beach volunteer and park staff at the park's grand opening June 21.

Capital event volunteers answered questions on the latest State Parks calendars, icon prints and other items available for sale (see www. parks.wa.gov) and distributed general information on parks features and locations across the state.



and distributed information during the agency's annual birthday celebration Feb. 28 and 29 at the Legislative Building in Olympia.

Agency refines goals, reports progress towards Centennial 2013

March 19, 2008 marked the 95th birthday of the Washington state park system – which means the 100-year celebration called Centennial 2013 is a mere five years away.

"Yes, we have lots to do in the next five years, but it's very exciting to see what we've accomplished so far," said Rex Derr, State Parks director. "The governor and legislature have supported us, our partners have supported us and staff is very focused on making things happen. I think citizens will be happy with our progress."

The Centennial 2013 Advisory Committee and governor have helped the Commission place top priority on fixing up the current park system. The Commission recently reaffirmed three priorities – 1. Fix what we have; 2. Expand existing parks, trails and services; and 3. Build new parks and trails for the future.

Commissioners subsequently refined the plan's goals to reflect a reality check that includes inflation and rising fuel and materials costs. Essential areas of focus remain the same. Planning for new parks will continue, but new park openings realistically will occur beyond 2013.

"While the first focus of the Centennial 2013 Plan is fixing up the park system we have right now, we need to keep planning ahead and thinking about the future so we set the stage for what will happen beyond the Centennial," said Commission Chair Cecilia Vogt of Yakima. "Our state is growing, life is becoming more complicated and people absolutely need parks for health and spiritual well-being. While we're taking care

of our beautiful parks, we need to

keep thinking ahead and make sure we leave that legacy for our children and grandchildren."

Here are highlights of the 2003-2007 report, which shows progress made through Dec. 31, 2007. The intention of the Commission is to complete all goals by 2013. The full report is available online at www.parks.wa.gov/centennial2013/progress.

- 42 of 120 state parks have land-use plans. Land-use plans are developed with participation of the public to ensure that citizens have a say in their parks and understand their care. Completed plans serve as an important tool for park managers in balancing recreation offerings and stewardship of natural resources.
- 66 of 120 state parks have both interpretive programs and community events. Park managers work closely with communities to welcome them into parks for their important events. Park staff offer exciting learning opportunities in campfire programs and interpretive activities.

In one region alone, staff gave more than 8,000 interpretive programs in 2007 and served more than 80,000 visitors.

- 2,012 of 2,987 deferred maintenance and equipment replacement items (\$23.1 million of \$40 million) were eliminated by end of 2007. The backlog list was developed in 2001, after years of restricted budgets had required managers to put off maintenance in order to keep parks up and running. We're catching up.
- 291,000 volunteer hours were recorded (goal of 500,000 by 2013) in 2007, and park staff reported a total of 436 partnerships (goal of 500 by 2013), showing a commitment to working in cooperation

with citizens, communities and organizations.

- 60 of 120 state parks had business plans in place by end of 2007. Park managers develop the plans to include cost-saving strategies and all revenue sources to help ensure that parks are managed with a focus on financial sustainability, efficiency and innovation.
- Trails, nine expansion parks and historic sites. In 2007, progress was made in all these areas.
- 48 of 100 Connections citizen gift improvements were completed in parks all over the state by end of 2007. Improvements range from trails and dayuse improvements to playground structures and rental cabins.

Center for Wooden Boats, State Parks agree to formal partnership at Cama Beach

In February The Center for Wooden Boats, Inc., (CWB) of Seattle formally agreed to offer public maritime programs at Cama Beach State Park on Camano Island. The State Parks Commission unanimously approved the 30-year cooperative agreement.

State Parks Director Rex Derr said the partnership is in keeping with the Commission goal to foster relationships with partner organizations to enhance park services for everyone. All partners agree to pay special attention to the park's sensitive environment as they work together.

"CWB is honored to be a partner in the planning of Cama Beach State Park," said Dick Wagner, CWB's founding director. "It is envisioned as a time capsule of 1930s waterfront recreation. We are looking forward to playing a critical role in bringing the vision to life and working alongside the state's other partners on the project."

The Center for Wooden Boats is

a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides gathering places and programs where maritime history comes alive through direct experience.

Cama Beach State Park, on Camano Island, was a shellfish gathering site for Native tribes going back at least 1,600 vears. In the 1930s through 1980s, it was operated as a private fishing resort. In the 1990s, the state began acquiring the property, some through purchase and some through donation by the Worthington and Hamalainen families. The families also donated funds to the Washington State Parks Foundation towards development of Cama Beach into a state park. The park is scheduled to open for day use and cabin rental in June, while construction of a dining hall and retreat center continues.

Phone reservations will be taken starting in April. Watch for a new Web page at www.parks.wa.gov.

Sustainability steps taken at state parks

A new plan, tracking tool and resolution are the latest steps taken at State Parks to align the agency's core values, such as environmental stewardship, with statewide business practices.

During the past two years, an agency team created a comprehensive plan, including a checklist, so that parks across the state could mark progress towards their green goals and meet reporting requirements.

"We want to improve our stewardship role in caring for the environment," said Ted Smith, stewardship manager. "We also want to take a closer look at our use of resources from a 'green' angle and through a data-driven lens."

About 70 percent of Washington's parks currently use recycling practices, to some extent, a good foundation to build on as those practices expand, according to Billie-Gwen Russell, sustainability coordinator at State Parks.

The Integrated Sustainability Plan will help track how individual parks save money and conserve resources. Currently, 29 out of 120 parks use the plan, with statewide adoption projected by the end of 2009.

Also, a new form was designed to automatically track and analyze resources, including energy, waste and fuel consumption, in each park. Ranger Fritz Osborne, Columbia Hills State Park, developed the charts in his own time.

In late 2007 the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission issued a sustainability resolution that read, "The Commission hereby directs staff to develop a plan to make Washington State Parks the leading state park system in the country for sustainability and being green. The plan will include a definition of sustainability, key 'green' components and a timeline for implementation. The initial plan should be presented to the Commission before year's end in 2008."